

The citizens of the township of Lower Merion have many achievements of which to be proud. They have a deep sense of civic pride and involvement. In fact, the Township maintains a "Community Resources Leadership Bank" of citizens interested in participating in Township Boards or Commissions. This innovation and vision distinguishes Lower Merion and it remains one of the most progressive townships in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

Township officials in Lower Merion are deeply committed to the environment. Through open space conservation and environmental protection, the Lower Merion Township continually works to improve the quality of life for its residents. Lower Merion officials have demonstrated a strong commitment to their schools and community, and the township has one of the highest ranking school systems in Pennsylvania.

I am proud to represent such an extraordinary municipality. This anniversary should serve as a tribute to hard work and dedication for all who have made the Lower Merion Township the place it is.

#### HONORING THE 150TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE CITY OF SANTA BARBARA

##### HON. LOIS CAPPS

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 11, 2000*

Mrs. CAPPS. Mr. Speaker, today I commemorate the 150th Anniversary of the City of Santa Barbara. This past Sunday, I was honored to join the citizens of Santa Barbara in celebrating the rich history and legacy of our community.

Santa Barbara is a vibrantly diverse city that draws its heritage from the Chumash, Spanish, Mexican, American and European peoples. Although the incorporation of the city was in 1850, there are other milestones that preceded this date. The community was named in 1602 by Sebastian Vizcaino, a Spanish employer, who came to the area on Saint Barbara's day. In 1782, the King of Spain directed that a presidio be constructed in Santa Barbara and in 1786, the Mission was founded. Both the Presidio and the Mission hold much cultural significance to the citizens of Santa Barbara today and serve as an important reminder of our shared history. In 1850, a charter was adopted by a vote of the citizens and established Santa Barbara as one of the five California charter cities. As a charter city, the citizens of Santa Barbara enjoy "home rule" and as a result, the city is a model of how a community can preserve and sustain a high quality of life for its people.

Today, Santa Barbara boasts strong public and private schools, the nationally recognized University of California, Santa Barbara, Westmont College and Santa Barbara City College, as well as thriving small businesses, high-tech and tourism industries. But above all, as Santa Barbarans, we pride ourselves on the beauty of our environment and the quaint charm of our community. The importance of clean water, clean air and open spaces has long been recognized as a key to our community's success and we remain committed to protecting the unparalleled beauty that Santa Barbara possesses today.

Mr. Speaker, I am very honored to represent Santa Barbara in Congress and I ask that my colleagues join me in celebrating the many achievements of the citizens of Santa Barbara and the contributions that the city has made to America. We wish the community of Santa Barbara 150 more years of success and prosperity.

#### PERSONAL EXPLANATION

##### HON. BARBARA LEE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 11, 2000*

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, due to what may have been a technical difficulty, I was not recorded on rollcall vote 114. Had I been recorded, I would have voted "yes."

#### HONORING THE SOUTHERLAND HEAD START PROGRAM ON THEIR 35TH ANNIVERSARY

##### HON. NICK LAMPSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 11, 2000*

Mr. LAMPSON. Mr. Speaker, today I congratulate the Southerland Head Start program on their 35th Anniversary. For thirty-five years this school has been serving children in need and making sure that they have the resources necessary for a successful educational future.

In Beaumont there were originally two Head Start Centers, one at Dunbar and the other at South Park. Mavis Bryant was the director at Dunbar from 1965–1984, and Claire Collier was the director at South Park from 1966–1984. In 1984, the districts merged and the center became known as Southerland Head Start, where Claire Collier served as director until her retirement in 1994. Two principals/directors have followed Claire Collier, Charles Vanderburg served from 1994–1999, and Gloria Harrison is currently serving.

Southerland serves the community well, and there are currently 460 students enrolled in the program. Southerland's motto is "Touching Children . . . Reaching Families," and they truly live up to that motto. They reach out to children, improving their self esteem, health, and physical development. Children at Southerland learn and grow in an environment that promotes positive experiences and an understanding of the world around them.

I believe that we must provide an opportunity for every child in America to fulfill her or his potential through participation in an enriching and challenging learning environment starting at birth, and programs such as Southerland Head Start help us achieve that goal. I would like to thank Dr. Carrol Thomas, Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Mae E. Jones-Clark, Deputy Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction, and Gloria Harrison, Head Start Director/Principal, and all of the other people who are serving the school with unparalleled dedication.

Mr. Speaker, Southerland has served the children of Beaumont for thirty-five years, and I congratulate them as they celebrate this milestone of achievement.

#### LET'S CRAFT A FAIR DEAL FOR OUR VETERANS

##### HON. BOB FILNER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, April 11, 2000*

Mr. FILNER. Mr. Speaker, today I testified before the VA, HUD Appropriations Subcommittee. In that testimony which follows, I emphasized our duty to provide adequate funds for the vital programs that serve our Nation's veterans.

I am pleased that the administration's budget for the year 2001 recognizes that the men and women who have served in uniform deserve an adequate budget for the Department of Veterans Affairs [VA], and I believe that the efforts of many members of the House VA Committee and the efforts of our veterans' service organizations, specifically in formulating the Independent Budget, have been instrumental in producing a much better budget proposal than last year. I want to acknowledge these efforts.

The \$1.4 billion increase in the health care budget will assure our aging and disabled veterans who need medical care—especially long-term care, emergency care and specialized services—that their needs are a high priority. However, I join my colleagues and the authors of this year's Independent Budget in objecting to the proposal that \$350 million of new resources for medical care authorized by the recently passed Veterans Millennium Act be deposited to the Treasury. Funds collected from veterans for the provision of veterans' health care should be used to enhance the health care for veterans—not as a substitute for appropriated dollars.

I also want to emphasize my continuing concern that the VA is not adequately meeting the benefit and health care needs of veterans who served in the Gulf war and who now suffer from various diagnosed and undiagnosed disabilities. It has been almost 10 years since the men and women of our armed services were sent to the gulf! The veterans of the Gulf war are sick with illnesses whose causes and cures remain a mystery. We must not relax our efforts to fund necessary and appropriate research. I join the authors of the Independent Budget in supporting an increase in funding for VA medical research, and specifically request that the medical research budget be increased by \$65 million as recommended in the Independent Budget and that at least \$30 million of that increase be directed to research involving the health of Gulf war veterans.

As our veterans population ages, the need for long-term care increases. One means of providing access to such care is through the funding of State Veterans Homes. A new home will be opening in April in my congressional district, and already there is a waiting list. I want other areas to have the same opportunity as the veterans in the San Diego region will have with the opening of this new home. Therefore, I am opposed to the proposed decrease in funding for State Homes and urge this committee to provide adequate funding for this critical program.

I am also pleased that this administration has recognized what Members of Congress have known for years. Additional personnel are needed if the VA is to promptly and accurately adjudicate claims for compensation and